



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mount Rainier National Park

Winter Trail Report – 01/09/15

Please note the date for reports and recognize changes may have occurred since report. If a trail or area does not have a specific report, conditions are unknown as of the date of this summary. Check the Northwest Avalanche Center Report and the Mount Rainier Recreational Weather Report before heading out. Avalanche assessment and route-finding skills are needed for many winter activities in the park this time of year. Call the **Longmire Information Center** between 9:00 AM and 4:30 PM if you have questions (360-569-6575).

Weather Report Link: <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/sew/get.php?wfo=sew&pil=REC&sid=SEW>

Avalanche Report Link: <http://nwac.us/avalanche-forecast/current/cascade-west-south/>

Southwest Summary Report, 01/09/15: A few days of very high freeze levels with heavy rain follow by sun has melted and consolidated the snow considerably. The forecast is predicting freeze levels vacillating around Paradise's elevation of 5400' in the short term. Expect further melting of snow at lower elevations. Any new snow Paradise might receive will likely melt and consolidate quickly as well.

Longmire Area Trails, 01/09/15: There are only a few inches of snow on the ground in Longmire, expect less once you get under the canopy of the old growth forests. Multiple downed trees persist on the trails in the Longmire area. All trails can be hiked with good boots with not enough snow for snowshoes.

The foot bridge over the Nisqually to Carter Falls (near Cougar Rock campground) is washed out, no report on the trail beyond that point.

Remember everyone is responsible for their own navigation when snow covers the trails.

Longmire Winter Trails PDF:

<http://www.nps.gov/mora/planyourvisit/upload/Longmire-Winter-Trails-Dec13.pdf>

Paradise Area Trails, 01/09/15: Paradise 5400' the snow is a compact 4' approximately. The last few days the snow has been reported as soft and mushy due to the high freeze level. As the freeze levels change over the next week the snow might remain soft and wet or turn into a very hard icy surface depending on temperatures and sun exposure. Be prepared for changing conditions. Pan Point and the lower snowfield are still reported as slick and icy, travel in this area is not recommended without proper equipment. Coming down an icy slope is much harder than going up it.

Three of our winter routes have been marked with orange and black poles. Please refer to the

Paradise Winter Recreation PDF for marked routes and suggested routes to avoid avalanche terrain in the Paradise area. Remember navigation is your responsibility and tracks in the snow are not a trail.

<http://www.nps.gov/mora/planyourvisit/upload/Paradise-Winter-RecreationWmap-Nov13-1.pdf>

East Side Area Update, 01/04/15: 4" of snow at the highway 410 boundary gate, 14" at the White River Campground 4400'. High freeze levels and the predicted rainfall will likely cause melting and a loss of snow depth. No downed trees between the park boundary and the White River Campground.

Sno-Parks in the area:

The Silver Creek Sno-Park (un-motorized) is currently accessible, fully plowed and in great shape.

The Suntop Sno-Park (un-motorized) on FS 73 road is in operation and plowed.

The Pyramid Sno-Park, 10 miles up the FS 70 road is open for snowmobile use. There are over 68 miles of groomed trail accessible from this sno-park.

Sno-Parks are not operated by the National Park Service but instead the Washington State Parks. Please visit their website for further information.

<http://www.parks.wa.gov/130/Winter-Recreation>

For more information on where snowmobiling is allowed within Mount Rainier National Park please visit the winter recreation section of the park's website.

<http://www.nps.gov/mora/planyourvisit/winter-recreation.htm>

There is self-registration set up at the north boundary arch bulletin board for wilderness backpacking. There is also self-registration set up at the White River Ranger Station for backpacking and climbing. (Climbers are directed to fill out a climbing card and to pay the fee utilizing a pre-addressed envelope when they return from their climb).


Carbon/Mowich Area Update 12/3/14:

Call (360) 829-9639 for the **Carbon River Ranch Ranger Station** hours. There is self-registration for climbing and backpacking set up outside when the Carbon River Ranch Ranger Station is not staffed.

There is light snow on the ground near the Carbon River entrance, the warming trend and rain will likely melt this snow. There is snow and ice on the road to Mowich outside of the park boundary with approximately 1.5' of snow at Mowich Lake itself.

The lower elevation trails can be quite icy, traction devices recommended but without enough depth for snowshoes yet. The old road bed to Ispat Creek campground has sections washed out with the remainder being very muddy.

Recent flooding has created numerous hazards and difficulties in the Carbon River/Mowich area.



Bridges are washed out to Chenius Falls, over the Mowich Rivers on the Wonderland and on the approach to Carbon Glacier on the Wonderland.

The trail to Carbon Glacier also had sections wash out and other areas blocked by landslides. With bridges and sections of trail washed out, sections of trail blocked by landslides, and icy conditions elsewhere, this trip would be very hazardous. For any experienced back-country user who still is considering this hike please use extreme caution.